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*UNH Media Relations*

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## Media Relations

### UNH And UNH Chapter Of AAUP At Impasse; Process Continues With Mediation

October 27, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire administration and the UNH chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) have agreed that contract negotiations are at impasse for the second time in nearly a year. The next step in the process is mediation, which is expected to occur before the end of the semester.

Impasse occurs when the parties agree that progress is stalled and that outside assistance is required to facilitate efforts to reach a settlement. According to state labor law, the university and the AAUP will now engage in mediation and, if necessary, fact finding. Each requires a neutral, third party who is in a position to encourage resolution of the challenging issues that led to the impasse. There is no provision for binding arbitration in state law.



The primary unresolved issues are salary, benefits and revisions to the termination clause. "We are extremely disappointed that negotiations have gone on for so long and the parties remain so very far apart," said Candace Corvey, the UNH administration's chief negotiator. "Many economic challenges including, but certainly not limited to, the epic 50% cut in state funding to UNH have reasonably shaped the university's positions on salary and benefits."

According to Edward Dupont, chair of the University System Board of Trustees, the bargaining parameters set by the Board for salary and benefits proposals are "...generous in light of the tremendous financial pressures facing the state and the university system and extremely fair in comparison to the marketplace and to non-unionized employees of the system." Data for FY11 show UNH faculty salaries at market.


The UNH administration's most recent formal proposal was for a four-year contract containing a 7.9 percent salary package plus the possibility of an additional market adjustment. The package included a 2 percent lump sum bonus for FY11 contingent on agreement by December 31, 2011, and 5.9 percent in base salary increases over the period FY12 through FY14. The administration is also seeking changes to faculty benefits that would bring the AAUP faculty into parity with all other employees of the university, who have already taken such reductions, and make an important contribution to ongoing efforts to contain benefit costs across the system. According to Corvey, the leadership of the faculty union is proposing a 16 percent salary increase over the four years and has agreed to less than 10 percent of the benefits changes on the table. "It is extremely difficult to find any basis in fairness or economic reality to justify their position," said Corvey.


"The university is committed to an approach to total compensation that continues to attract and retain talented faculty and staff by keeping pace with the marketplace as its resources allow," said Corvey. "It is important to note that the 7.9 percent salary package is a minimum, because the offer includes an additional commitment to bring faculty salaries to the mean of the comparator group at the end of the contract if they have fallen below that mean by FY14. This represents a remarkably powerful commitment on the part of the Board of Trustees and the president to ensure that faculty salaries remain competitive even in the most difficult financial conditions. No one can predict with any degree of certainty what the marketplace will look like in 2014, but we can assess the facts at the time and adjust accordingly."


With respect to revisions to the termination clause, the university believes that the president should be able to swiftly terminate any faculty member who is found guilty of or pleads guilty to a sex offense or an act of violence. "We certainly believe that anyone accused of such egregious acts deserves appropriate due process, and clearly the N.H. judicial system provides those rights. But, additional layers and months of process within UNH after an external court has established guilt are unwarranted. The university has made a simple and completely justifiable proposal to the union covering a narrow set of plainly unacceptable behaviors, and we do not understand why the union leadership resists it," said Corvey.

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The current one-year faculty collective bargaining agreement expired June 30, 2010.

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T-hall

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